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READ BEFORE THE

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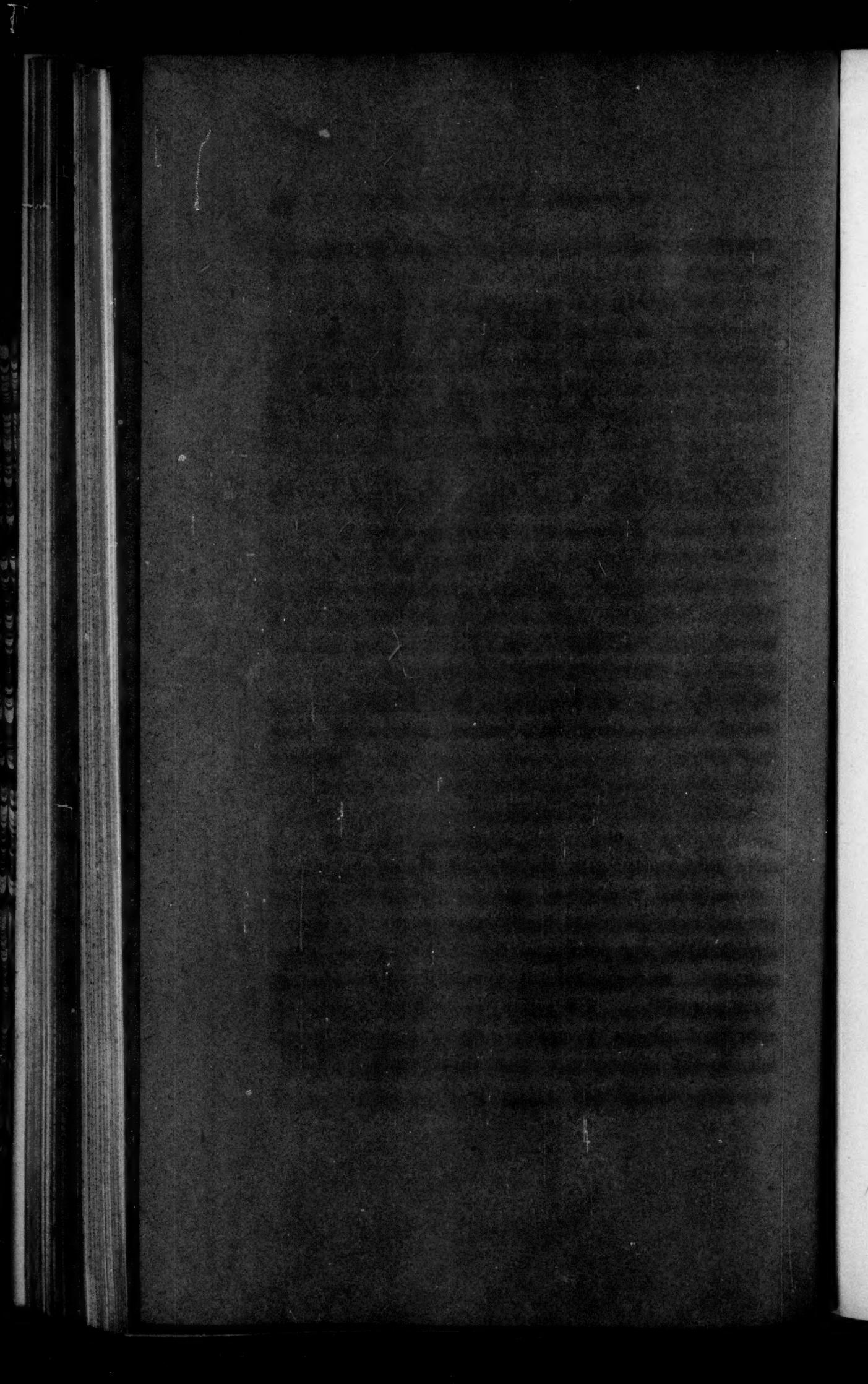
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1825.



ARTICLE IV.

A MEMOIR

OF THE LATE

HON. JOHN BROOKS, M. D. LL. D.

President of the Massachusetts Medical Society, A. A. S. &c. &c.

BY JOHN DIXWELL, M. D.

Corresponding Secretary of the Society.

Read at the Annual Meeting, June 1, 1825, at the request of the Counsellors.

Nec unquam in suam famam gestis exultavit —————— ita
virtute in obsequendo, verecundiâ in prædicando, extra invidiam, nec ex-
tra gloriam erat.
TACITUS.

GENTLEMEN,

IN conformity with the usages of our society, I had selected a medical topic for discussion, on the present occasion; but the decease of our President, involved the community in the most deep and poignant grief, and excited the sympathetic attention of your counsellors: They paid the tribute of their respect to his memory, and requested me to delineate his life and character, on this anniversary.* To do

*Note A.

this, in a manner somewhat approaching to the dignity of the subject, and as would comport with your esteem and affection for him, it was necessary that I should relinquish my original design. Instead of directing your attention to the means of arresting the fatal grasp of the king of terrors, it has become my melancholy duty to lead you to contemplate the magnitude of his conquests.

Death is not awed by greatness, nor “warded off by virtues:” He seems to take delight in aiming his shafts at superior goodness, and in sending “those, who bear the brightest image of their maker, to mingle with kindred spirits.” But herein, he executes the benevolent designs of the Almighty; and the survivors are left the consoling and even delightful employment of displaying the excellencies of their departed friends, of portraying the beauties of their characters, and transmitting their bright examples to posterity.

If we look into the history of this Commonwealth, we find that many members of our profession have signalized themselves for their talents as civilians, and for their ardor in maintaining the rights of the people; and some of them have been distinguished for their splendid achievements in war. Although these patriotic labors and exploits are foreign from the sciential pursuits of our profession, and from the objects for which this society was founded; yet we cannot be insensible spectators of events which involve the happiness of the community, nor of the glory which our country has derived from the im-

perishable renown that these eminent patriots have acquired.

In a new country, individuals cannot devote themselves exclusively to science. The public exigencies call for the exertions of all classes of the people. In times of trouble and political contests, men of education in every profession, are looked up to for council and advice, and they give a tone and direction to public opinion. It is well known to you, that the venerable clergy of New England, were among the most able and indefatigable assertors of our political rights: The sacred character of their duties, forbade them to engage in the labors of the senate, or to signalize themselves in the field; but they brought the aid of religion to our support. They appealed to the God of justice for the rectitude of our cause, and lighted up a holy flame of enthusiastic devotion to liberty, which burnt with a pure and steady brightness, until our glorious independence was accomplished.

These patriotic services were no less important to the cause of pure religion, than to the political state of the country. Religious liberty, or the public exercise of that liberty, has its foundation in the freedom of civil government. On the contrary, there is no tyranny so insufferable as that which is exercised over the mind, controlling its powers and its prerogatives in the great duties of devotion. Hence, our ancestors, the pilgrims, forsook the enjoyments of a polished society and a refined life, together with all the endearments of friends and kindred, and em-

countered the dangers of a boisterous ocean, and submitted to the deprivations and hardships of a rigorous climate and a savage wilderness, that they might enjoy the free exercise of their religious opinions, and pursue their devotions, unawed by the odious decrees of an hierarchical monarch, or the persecutions resulting from the oppressive policy of a church government, in union with that of the state.

As it respects science or emolument, our profession is farther removed from any interest in politics than that of the divine. So totally disconnected is medical science from political, that the study of the one, completely abstracts the mind from the other. Neither can we perceive that the advancement of the former depends on the liberal principles of the latter. The faculty might continue their devotion to the physical sciences and the exercise of the healing art, as quietly and securely, under the most unlimited despotism, as in the most free republic; neither the despot nor the patriot, has any thing to fear from their researches, and they, each of them, have equal need of their aid. But the practical duties of the physician are calculated to call forth the sympathies and affections of the heart. He is in the habits of associating with society on terms of the closest intimacy. He is occupied in administering to the sufferings of mankind, and, if he be a man of feeling, he cannot fail to cherish a strong affection for those whom he relieves, and to sympathize with those who suffer. Influenced by these powerful

sympathies and affections, in addition to the common ties which bind man to man, he is led to take a deep interest in passing events, either physical or political, which affect the happiness of society. If the people be struggling under the oppressive hand of power, he hears their complaints with the most friendly ear—He feels for their sufferings—His heart throbs with the highest indignation for their wrongs—From the gloomy forebodings of his anxious mind, a tumult of contending feelings rises within him—He ponders on the means of relief—Bright visions of emancipation are unfolded to his view—His soul is enraptured with the prospect—The pure spirit of disinterested patriotism takes full possession of his breast, and controls all his powers and all his energies—if he be a man of eloquence, he mounts the rostrum, and animates his countrymen to heroic deeds and splendid achievements—if his talents and powers be of a more active character, he enters the field of battle and devotes his life to the freedom of his country. Thus the physician leaves the shades of retirement and the fields of science, enters into public life, and becomes the most pure and disinterested patriot.

The abilities requisite to form the hero and the statesman, exist in every class of society; but they are only called forth by great events, and in times of powerful collision. The principles and feelings which led to our independence, were admirably calculated to excite the most ardent enthusiasm, and to rouse into action those latent powers which, in more

quiet times, might have remained unknown. Were it not for this glorious event, our late President might have remained through life, the able and benevolent dispenser of the comforts and relief of our godlike profession, displaying the peculiar excellencies of his head and heart within the limited circle of his duties; but the hero and the statesman would have remained in embryo. The talents and virtues which were then called forth, and which regulated his conduct till his decease, we this day commemorate.

You call on me to exhibit him to you, as he appeared through life. To give a just and striking portrait of him is no ordinary task. It is easy to draw the outlines, but to finish the picture so as to display all that strength and dignity of character, together with that peculiar delicacy and composure which were so happily blended in the original, requires the touch of a master's pencil. Such was your love and veneration for him, that, if we can succeed in giving you a likeness which you will recognize, even though it should not display all the loftiness of his character, we trust that you will receive it with kindness and partiality.

It is the fortune of some men to derive their origin from a long line of illustrious ancestors, whose brilliant talents and heroic daring have descended as heirlooms to their offspring, and, while they shed a lustre on their name, have served as an incentive to glorious deeds. But the subject of this memoir could not boast of the exploits of his ancestors, as

a claim to preferment or an excitement to glory. His achievements were of a still more noble origin—they arose from the efforts of his own superior mind. His ambition led him to cherish the sentiments expressed by the wise Ulysses, when contending for the arms of Achilles.

*"Nam genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco."*

The Hon. John Brooks was born in Medford, Massachusetts, in the year 1752. His father, Capt. Caleb Brooks, was a respectable farmer, much esteemed and beloved by his friends and neighbors. His mother was a woman of superior personal charms, and of remarkable talents, for one of her advantages and station in life. She early discovered in her son those faculties which were destined to raise him from the plough to the first stations in society, and was solicitous to place him where he might cultivate them to advantage. We are probably much indebted to this excellent woman for the estimable traits of character displayed in the son. Character is formed at an earlier period of life than is generally supposed. The impressions made on the tender mind in the nursery, and the habits acquired there, have a permanent influence through life. Our matrons give the first and most important impress of our moralists, our statesmen and our heroes. Happy is the lot of those who have mothers of that superior excellence which rises above the vain show and glitter of life, whose pleasures centre in the

care of their offspring, in forming their habits and in directing their minds to elevated sentiments and noble objects, whose greatest pride is in those splendid ornaments, the virtues displayed by their children.

Mrs. Brooks had an excellent friend in her physician, Dr. Simon Tufts, at that time a very respectable practitioner in Medford. His high standing in our profession is evinced, by his being enrolled in the list of our members previously to the present organization of the society, when its number was limited to seventy, and none were elected fellows, but those who were the most distinguished practitioners in the state. Dr. Tufts observed the anxiety of the mother to elevate her son to a superior station in life, and encouraged her to give him as good an education as their finances would permit. He was accordingly placed at the town school, where he was taught the rudiments of science, and the Latin and Greek languages. Such was his proficiency in his scholastic studies, and so amiable and exemplary was his character, that he secured the friendship of Dr. Tufts, who took him into his family, at the age of 14, to educate him for his profession. The skill and science of the instructor, and the indefatigable attention of the pupil, supplied the deficiencies arising from the want of a liberal education. His progress in medical science, and in judicious practical observation, was such as to secure the confidence and respect of his master.

During his pupilage, the amiable traits of his char-

acter were more fully developed, and he began to display that talent and fondness for military discipline, which were eminently manifested at a subsequent period, and contributed to establish that erect and manly port, for which he was so remarkably distinguished. In the hours of relaxation from study, he amused himself with the drill and exercise of the soldier. His manners were so gentle and attractive, that he was the delight of all the village boys: they collected about him as the chief source of their pleasures and amusements; he formed them into a company, and trained and exercised them in all the duties of military discipline. Dr. Tufts' yard was often converted into a train-field, and displayed in miniature all "the pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war." These juvenile scenes are still recurred to with pleasure, by those who were engaged in them, as the happiest moments of their lives.

He continued, until he was 21 years old, under the tuition of Dr. Tufts, who then advised him to commence the practice of physic in the town of Reading, and gave him a high recommendation to the people, as well qualified for that important trust, and worthy of their fullest confidence. He accordingly settled there, and was soon after married,* and his prospects were fair for a very respectable establishment in his profession; but he was destined to act a more conspicuous part in the great drama of life.

The storm which had been a long time gathering

*Note B.

in our political horizon, began now to assume a most portentous aspect, ready to burst over the country with destructive fury. The stout hearts and steady minds of our countrymen had been preparing for the shock, resolved to defend themselves against its tremendous power. The busy hum of warlike preparation was heard through the country. Companies were formed in almost every town, who held themselves in readiness to march at a minute's warning. One of these companies was raised in Reading, and Brooks was elected to command it. He gave all the attention he could to this company, consistently with his professional duties; and was active in his exertions to drill his men, and infuse into them that heroic spirit and ardent patriotism which animated his own breast.

He was, however, much perplexed to determine what course he ought to pursue in this momentous crisis. He had a strong attachment to his profession, and was deeply impressed with the moral obligations he was under, to discharge the duties of it with fidelity. The kindly affections of his heart, and the amenity of his manners, qualified him to administer relief with peculiar acceptance, and gave the fullest promise of a skillful and popular physician. He had just entered into practice with flattering prospects, and with all the ardor of a youthful mind. He had already many patients afflicted with severe disease. Judge then, with what reluctance he listened to the calls of patriotism, urging him to relinquish these prospects and duties, to engage in a contest fraught with the most appalling dangers to

himself and to his country. On the other hand, he had displayed such talents as a military disciplinarian, and was so esteemed and beloved by those who were under his command, and by all who were connected with him in military duty, that he was thought the most competent to take the lead in their affairs. In the organization of a regiment, he was elected a major. This honor he declined, from an apprehension that it might call him too much from professional duties, and involve him too far in the military and political movements of the times; so that he would finally be under the necessity of relinquishing his profession; an event which he was anxiously desirous to avoid. His fellow officers would not accept his resignation, and unanimously repeated their solicitations that he would assume the duties of an office which he was so well qualified to sustain. This flattering distinction was enough to shake his resolution. He again took the subject into serious consideration, and the same objections presented themselves to his mind. He then determined to meet his brother officers, and absolutely decline the honors they were disposed to thrust upon him.

He was thus situated, on the memorable 19th of April, 1775, when the news arrived that a detachment of the British army had marched to Lexington and Concord. His ardent patriotism then rose superior to all other considerations. His high-minded spirit could not shrink from the duties which devolved on him as a military commander. He ordered

out his company with promptness, and directed them to proceed on the route to Concord; and having made such provision for the medical relief of the sick under his care as the time would permit, he joined his gallant corps with all possible speed. Having arrived in the vicinity of Concord, he met the British on their retreat, with the cool and determined bravery of a veteran, and made such a disposition of his men, as to secure them from injury, and enable them to annoy the enemy with destructive volleys, as they passed a narrow defile. He then hung on their rear and flanks, in conjunction with other troops, until they arrived at Charlestown. The military talents and calm courage which he displayed on this occasion, were remarkable in a young man only 23 years of age, who had never seen a battle. It was noticed by those who had the direction of public affairs, and he soon after received the commission of a major in the Continental army.

He now entered on the duties of a soldier with ardor, and devoted all the powers of his mind to the cause of his country and the profession of arms. He carried into the service a mind pure and elevated, and ardent in the pursuit of knowledge. He had a high sense of moral rectitude, which governed all his actions. Licentiousness and debauchery were strangers to his breast; they fled from his presence, awed by his superior virtue. His gentlemanly deportment and unassuming manners secured the favor of his superiors in office, and rendered him the delight of his equals and inferiors. The following

description of **Agricola** by **Tacitus**, his inimitable biographer, is peculiarly applicable to **Brooks**.

"*Nec Agricola licenter, more juvenum, qui militiam in lasciviam vertunt, neque segniter, ad voluptates et commeatus, titulum tribunatus et inscitiam retulit: sed noscere provinciam, nosci exercitui, discere à peritis, sequi optimos, nihil appetere jactatione, nihil ob formidinem recusare, simulque et anxius et intentus agere.*"

Although he sought no enterprize through vain glory, his active zeal and high ambition led him to solicit the post of danger, if he could thereby render useful service to his country.

When Gen. Ward had determined to fortify the heights of Charlestown, and arrangements were made for this purpose, finding that he was not included in the detachment, he solicited the general to permit him to accompany it, and his request was granted. He was active during the whole night of the 16th of June, in throwing up intrenchments, in reconnoitering the ground, and in watching the movements of the enemy. On the morning of the 17th, when it was perceived that the enemy were making preparations for an assault, he was despatched by Col. Prescott, as a confidential officer, to inform Gen. Ward of the movements, and to represent to him the importance of his sending reinforcements. This duty prevented his being in that glorious battle which has immortalized the heroes who were engaged in it, and consecrated the ground to everlasting fame.

This action established the reputation of our countrymen for determined bravery, and displayed the lofty spirit which actuated them in defence of their rights; convincing the enemy that they had to con-

tend with a formidable foe. The sacrifice then made of our country's best blood on freedom's shrine, gave a sure augury of the successful termination of the contest. The lofty minded and enthusiastic Warren, with all his acquirements and accomplishments, had offered himself a victim in this glorious oblation. As his spirit ascended to heaven, it diffused its heroic influence in every heart.

Amidst the exulting feelings which this dearbought victory of the enemy inspired, our infant army did not fail to profit by the experience they had gained. The advantages of superior discipline in the enemy, were apparent to every one. They made a strong impression on the minds of our officers, and especially on that of our youthful hero. He had already acquired such a knowledge of tactics, that he had been consulted by superior officers on a system of discipline to be introduced into our army. He now applied himself with renewed diligence to this important part of his duty, and he soon acquired a high reputation as a disciplinarian. The corps he commanded were distinguished during the whole war for the superiority of their discipline, evinced by their gallant conduct in battle, and by their regular movements in retreat. He was second only to the celebrated Baron Steuben, in his knowledge of tactics. After this officer joined the army and was appointed inspector-general, we find that Brooks was associated with him in the arduous duty of introducing a uniform system of exercise and manœuvres into the army.

He assisted in fortifying the heights of Dorchester, which compelled the British to evacuate Boston. He was very efficient in the successful retreat from Long Island. He acted a distinguished part in the battle of White Plains; and when the detachment of our army was overpowered by numbers, his regiment, of which he was the most efficient officer, so ably covered the retreat, that it received the distinguished acknowledgments of Gen. Washington, for its gallant conduct.

In the year 1777, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the eighth Massachusetts regiment, the command of which devolved on him, in consequence of the sickness of the colonel. In the Spring of this year, he was ordered to join the northern army, and he took an active part in those movements and battles which terminated in the surrender of Gen. Burgoyne. In short, the capture of that army may be attributed, in no small degree, to his gallant conduct on the 7th of October, in the battle of Saratoga. You all know, how ably he turned the right of the enemy—with what fearless intrepidity he led on his regiment to storm their intrenchments, entering them at the head of his men with sword in hand, and putting to rout the veteran German troops which defended them—and with what firmness he maintained this post, which he had so gallantly gained, notwithstanding the utmost efforts to dislodge him. This action compelled the enemy to change his position, and the field was then open

for Gen. Gates to surround and capture his whole army.

On the surrender of Burgoyne, Col. Brooks was ordered to join the army under Gen. Washington, and soon after, went into winter quarters at Valley Forge, and in common with the army, suffered all those privations and hardships, which required more heroism to endure, than the most severe and bloody battles. How great are our obligations to those wonderful patriots, whom neither nakedness, nor disease, nor famine, nor the sword could dishearten!

To follow our hero through all his valuable and laborious military services, would be to give a minute history of our revolutionary war; for there was scarcely any important service performed in the northern and central operations of the army, in which he did not act a conspicuous part—To describe these, is the province of the historian—we allude only to those remarkable events which serve to illustrate his character.

At the conclusion of the war, our army had a still more severe ordeal to pass through, than the battles and privations they had endured. It remained for them to subdue their own passions and resentments, and to make this last and most noble sacrifice for the welfare of their country. The pay of the army was greatly in arrear, and most of the officers had spent, in their country's service, all they owned, and all they could borrow. Congress had no adequate funds for their payment, and it was deficient

in the power of creating them. In this deplorable state of things, inflammatory, anonymous letters, were circulated through the army, founded on the most plausible reasons, exciting them to retain their arms, and to take by force, what was due them in right. The apparent justice of this measure, concealed from the unreflecting, the horrid consequences which must have ensued from it. Fortunately for our country, there were many influential officers in the army, of that purity of heart, that soundness of judgment, and elevated patriotism, which led them to view with abhorrence, this fatal expedient; and it is highly honorable to Col. Brooks, that he was among the first who opposed it. He had taken measures to this effect, in his own regiment, before the opinions of Washington were known, and he had the satisfaction of finding that his sentiments were in perfect accordance with those of the Father of his Country. He was honored with his most grateful acknowledgments and full confidence. His brother officers were so strongly impressed with his wisdom and prudence, that he was appointed one of the committee, which finally made an adjustment with Congress, and allayed that dreadful excitement. By the influence of these magnanimous patriots, the army gave this distinguished proof of their devotion to the liberties of their country; and in the language of Washington, we may say, "had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining."

After the army was disbanded, Col. Brooks returned to private life, rich in the laurels he had won, in the affections of his fellow soldiers and in the esteem of the wise and good. He was not only free from the vices incident to a military life, but, what was remarkable, he had acquired more elevated sentiments of morality and religion. He was received in his native town, with all the kindness, the congratulations and attentions which love and friendship could elicit, or respect inspire. He was rich in honor and glory, but he had nothing to meet the claims of his beloved family, but the caresses of an affectionate heart.

His old friend Dr. Tufts, being infirm and advanced in life, was desirous of relinquishing his practice into the hands of his favorite pupil, whom he thought so worthy of confidence. His fellow townsmen responded to the wishes of his patron. He accordingly recommenced the practice of physic, under the most favorable auspices, in Medford and the neighboring towns. He was soon after elected a fellow of this society, and was one of its most valuable and respected members. On the extension and new organization of the society, in the year 1803, he was elected a counsellor, and continued to discharge the duties of this office, with fidelity, until he was Governor of the Commonwealth. He was then discontinued at his own request. In the year 1808, by the appointment of the board of counsellors, he delivered an anniversary discourse on Pneumonia, which has been published, and evinces

a mind well stored with medical science and correct practical observation.

On his retiring from the chair of state, he was again chosen a counsellor, with the view of electing him President of our society. It is unnecessary for me to expatiate on the pride and satisfaction we derived from his accepting this honor. Your own feelings will best convey to you the height of the honor which he reflected on our society. That he felt a deep interest in our prosperity, we have ample evidence in his so kindly remembering us in his will.*

As a physician he ranked in the first class of practitioners. He possessed in an eminent degree those qualities which were calculated to render him the most useful in his professional labors, and the delight of those to whom he administered relief. His manners were dignified, courteous and benign. He was kind, patient and attentive. His kind offices were peculiarly acceptable from the felicitous manner in which he performed them. His mind was well furnished with scientific and practical knowledge. He was accurate in his investigations, and clear in his discernment. He, therefore, rarely failed in forming a true diagnosis. If he were not so bold and daring as some, in the administration of remedies, it was because his judgment and good sense led him to prefer erring on the side of prudence rather than on that of rashness. He watched the operations of nature, and never interfered, unless it was obvious he could aid and support her. He

*Note C.

was truly, the "Hierophant of nature," studying her mysteries and obeying her oracles.

In his practice, he added dignity to his profession by his elevated and upright conduct. His lofty spirit could not stoop to the empirical arts which are too often adopted to obtain a temporary ascendancy. He soared above the sordid consideration of the property he should accumulate by his professional labors. Like the good and great Boerhaave, he considered the poor his best patients, for God was their paymaster. In short, he was the conscientious, the skillful and the benevolent physician—the grace and ornament of our profession.

His mind, however, was not so exclusively devoted to his professional duties, as to prevent his taking a deep interest in the affairs of state. He had contributed so largely towards establishing the independence of his country, and had exhibited such sincere devotion to its welfare, that his countrymen, who have ever been distinguished for the acuteness of their discernment in judging of public men and measures, were always ready to display their confidence in him. They felt an assurance that they might safely repose on his conscientious integrity, wisdom and patriotism. He was consequently called to fill numerous offices of high importance in the state.

He was for many years, major-general of the militia of his county, and established in his division such excellent discipline, and infused into it such an admirable spirit of emulation, that it was a most bri-

liant example for the militia of the state. In the insurrection of 1786, his division was very efficient in their protection of the courts of justice, and in their support of the government of the state. At this time, Gen. Brooks represented his town in general court, and he gave support to the firm and judicious measures of Gov. Bowdoin for suppressing that alarming rebellion. He was a delegate in the state convention for the adoption of the federal constitution, and was one of its most zealous advocates. After the establishment of the federal government, he was the second marshal appointed by Washington for this district, and afterwards received further evidence of his confidence and approbation, by being appointed inspector of the revenue.* He was successively elected to the senate and executive council of the state. He was appointed by the acute and discriminating Gov. Strong, as his adjutant-general, in that perilous crisis of our affairs, the late war with England. The prudence and discretion with which he discharged this arduous duty, will be long remembered by his grateful countrymen.

These multifarious and laborious public services were performed with so much punctuality and ability, and with such dignity and urbanity, that, on the retirement of Gov. Strong, in the year 1816, wise and discreet legislators from all parts of the commonwealth, selected him as the most suitable candidate for that high and responsible office. It will be recollectcd, how forcibly every judicious mind was impressed with the excellence of the se-

*Note D.

lection, and how strongly the public suffrages confirmed that opinion. His very name seemed to disarm party spirit with talismanic power; for many, who had never acted with his political friends, prided themselves in testifying their unlimited confidence in him.

It is fresh in your memories, with what trembling apprehensions he shrunk from the lofty attitude of the chair of state, and yet when placed there, with what singular ease and dignity he presided, and with what signal ability he discharged its various important duties. His government was firm and decided, yet it was so mild and gentle, that its influence was chiefly perceptible in his happy facility of allaying party spirit, and all the angry passions of our nature. It was like that of a beloved and revered parent, whom all are disposed to honor and obey.

Amidst these high military and political honors which his fellow citizens took delight in bestowing on him, almost every institution of a literary, religious, patriotic, benevolent or professional character, seemed to vie with each other in conferring their highest honors on him. Harvard University acknowledged the value of his literary acquirements, by conferring on him the degree of A. M., in the year 1787, and in 1816, he received the highest honors of that seminary, the degrees of M. D. and LL. D.

The society of Cincinnati recognised him as one of their most distinguished members. He was elected to deliver the first oration before them on the

4th of July, 1787; and on the death of Gen. Lincoln, their first president, Gen. Brooks was elected to succeed him.

He was a member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was President of the Washington Monument Association, of the Bunker Hill Monument Association, and of the Bible Society of Massachusetts.

Having faithfully and ably discharged the duties of chief magistrate for seven successive years, he expressed his determination to retire from the cares and anxieties of public life. How great were the public regrets, and how gladly would a large majority of his fellow citizens have retained his valuable services; but they forebore urging him to any further sacrifices for the good of his country. He retired to private life with dignity, and with the love and blessings of a grateful people.

Having imperfectly traced the brilliant path of his public career, let us for a moment contemplate Gov. Brooks in his private character; and perhaps we may discover the true source of all his greatness, the charm which bound the hearts of his countrymen to him in ties so strong. He possessed a heart free from all guile, and every inordinate selfish feeling—an evenness of temper and sweetness of disposition. His discordant passions, for we presume he had them, being human, were kept in complete subjection to his virtues. He had a peculiar composure and complacency of countenance; and the delicacy and courtesy of his manners were uncommonly attractive.

But above all, his conduct was regulated by the influence of that pure morality, derived from our holy religion, which was impressed deeply on his mind, at an early period of life.

To those who contemplate his fearless intrepidity in the field of battle, or have observed the ease and dignity of his deportment on the military parade, or in the chair of state, it may appear incredible that this brave man possessed an uncommon share of diffidence; but to those who have approached him nearly, it is well known that this was a predominant trait in his character. This quality, so rare in little minds, is seldom wanting in great ones; but is scarcely ever so paramount, as it was in our departed friend. It was absolutely necessary to make use of some degree of finesse, to induce him to accept any important office. This great reluctance in assuming responsibility, sometimes arises from inactivity or a love of ease—not so in him we would commemorate, for whatever might be his situation, he never was idle. So imposing is that obtrusive quality which some men possess, and so often does the world yield to its influence, that a diffident, retiring disposition, is often mistaken for deficiency in talent. The bold and daring genius, confident in his own imaginary superiority, who is constantly thrusting himself into public notice, can hardly conceive it possible that any one should possess talents, who does not seek every opportunity to display them; and with reluctance yields assent to their existence in an individual so unlike himself.

The mind of Gov. Brooks was clear in its perceptions, and discriminating in its judgment; it was active, ardent and industrious in the pursuit of every valuable attainment, and powerful in the application of those attainments for the benefit of others. Although his mind shrunk from observation, with the delicate excitability of the sensitive plant, it was like the oak in sustaining the pressure of every duty to his friends or his country.

In his relation to his native town, he completely reversed the maxim, that a prophet has no honor in his own country, for the inhabitants of Medford idolized him. They knew his worth and fully appreciated it. He was truly their friend and benefactor. He took so deep an interest in all their concerns, let their station in life be ever so humble, that they could always approach him with ease and confidence. They referred to him all their disputes, and so judicious were his decisions, that he had the rare felicity to satisfy all parties, and to reconcile them to bonds of amity. It was observed by an eminent lawyer, who resided there, that he had no professional business in Medford, for Gov. Brooks prevented all contentions in the law. In addition to these intrinsic services, he was the grace and the ornament of their social circles, and seemed to fill up the measure of all their enjoyments.

But what avail these noble talents, these splendid achievements or these godlike virtues! The grim messenger of death has swept them from our reach. Our beloved and revered friend, in whom they were

so eminently displayed, now lies a cold and inanimate clod of the valley, “and the places which knew him, shall know him no more for ever.” “But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory!” his spirit has risen to Him who gave it, and his virtues shall remain engraven on our hearts.

NOTES.

NOTE A.

Proceedings of the Counsellors of the Massachusetts Medical Society, on the decease of their President.

At an adjourned meeting of the Counsellors of the Massachusetts Medical Society, held on the second day of March, A. D. 1825,

It was announced by the Vice President, that John Brooks, M. D. LL. D., President of the Society, departed this life yesterday; whereupon, the following resolutions were offered by Dr. Warren:

Resolved, That the Counsellors regard with deep sensibility, the loss, by death, of the late President of the Society, and, that they feel assured they shall express the sentiments of the Society, as they do their own, in stating, that the Society has derived honor from having had, as their head, a man beloved in private life, justly respected in his profession, and distinguished in his state and country, for the faithful and honorable performance of high military and civil duties.

Resolved, That the Counsellors ask permission to attend the obsequies of their late President, both for themselves and the Fellows of the Society.

Resolved, That a Committee of three be appointed to wait on the family of the Hon. John Brooks, to express to them the sentiments of the Counsellors, on this bereavement, and to make the request that the Society may join in the solemnities at the interment of their late President; and, if this permission

be granted, that the same Committee invite the Fellows of the Society to unite with the Counsellors in paying a tribute of respect to the memory of the deceased.

Resolved, That the Anniversary Orator be requested to notice the life and character of our late President, in his address, at the annual meeting of the Society.

Voted, unanimously, to adopt the above resolutions.

Voted, That the Committee consist of Dr.'s Spooner, Warren, and Dixwell.

Voted, That the above resolves be published in the Daily Advertiser, and Boston Patriot of tomorrow, with such additions, as the report of the Committee, may render necessary.

In pursuance of the duty assigned them, the Committee proceeded to Medford, and communicated to the family of their late President, the feelings and wishes of the Counsellors; and were informed, that, although Gov. Brooks had forbidden any ostentatious parade at his funeral, and had left his injunctions that he should be buried in the simple manner of his friends and neighbors, yet he had consented, that, if any Society of which he was a member, should signify a desire to follow his remains to the tomb, his executors should grant them permission; and that he had named, particularly, the Massachusetts Medical Society. The following notice was thereupon published.

The Fellows of the Massachusetts Medical Society are specially requested to attend the funeral of the late Hon. John Brooks, at Medford, this day, at half past 3 o'clock.

WM. SPOONER,

Chairman of the Committee of Counsellors.

March 3d, 1825.

A large number of the Fellows of the Society accordingly attended the funeral solemnities, in conjunction with the Members of several other Societies to which the deceased belonged, and a great concourse of our most distinguished citizens, who united with the afflicted relatives and connexions in testifying their respect for his memory.

NOTE B.

Gov. Brooks married Miss Lucy Smith, of Medford, who died early in life; and he did not marry again. She left one daughter and two sons, who were reared and educated by the father with the greatest parental care and affection. The daughter married the Rev. George Oakley Stewart, of Quebec, and resided there until her decease. She left three children. The sons of Gov. Brooks, Alexander Scammell and John, devoted themselves to the service of their country. The former is a Major in the Artillery of the United States Army, and inherits his paternal estate. He married Miss Sarah Turner, of Boston, and has two children, Lucy and John. The latter was a Lieutenant in the Navy, and died in the midst of victory, heroically fighting for his country in the glorious battle of Lake Erie.

NOTE C.

Gov. Brooks bequeathed to the Massachusetts Medical Society the whole of his medical library, which contains many very valuable works.

NOTE D.

When President Washington visited Massachusetts, in the year 1789, he appeared solicitous to show Gen. Brooks that he held his character in high estimation, and cherished a strong personal regard for him. Among other attentions, he reviewed his Division of the Militia, and expressed the highest approbation of its discipline. And, when he was about to depart for Salem, he requested to take Gen. Brooks' house in his course. This deviation from his direct route, was accordingly made, that he might take leave of his friend and compatriot in arms. We had this narrative from a gentleman who was, at that time, officially, in constant attendance upon President Washington.